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THE CLAIMS DEFINING THE INVENTION ARE AS FOLLOWS:

1.   A funding system including a local processor operable by a broker, said local processor including an input means to allow said broker to input data in respect of a funding request, and said local processor analysing said data using predefined rules to determine whether funding will be offered in response to said funding request; and wherein said local processor synchronises data with a central processor.

2.   A system as claimed in claim 1, wherein when said local processor synchronises with said central processor, said central processor performs settlement of said funding request.

3.   A system as claimed in claim 1 or 2, wherein when said funding is accepted said system performs electronic settlement of contracts and payment schedules.

4.   A system as claimed in any one of claims 1 to 3, wherein following a failed payment said system creates default fees and performs automatic resubmissions.

5.   A system as claimed in any one of claims 1 to 4, wherein said system forwards delinquent accounts to a debt collection service and notifies all stakeholders.

6.   A system as claimed in any one of the preceding claims wherein data stored on said local processor is replicated on said central processor.

7.   A system as claimed in any one of the preceding claims, wherein the synchronising of data includes transmission of the data including a header packet to authenticate and validate said data.

8.   A system as claimed in claim 7, wherein said data also includes database table and record identification codes.

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9.   A funding system wherein a consumer desiring service from a merchant seeks funding from a provider, said provider providing funds from a source guaranteed by said merchant, and said consumer entering into a loan arrangement with said merchant to repay said funds.

5   10.   A funding system wherein a consumer desiring service from a merchant seeks funding from a provider, said provider providing funds from a source guaranteed by said merchant, and said consumer entering into a loan arrangement with said merchant to repay said funds and wherein said system includes a local processor operable by said merchant, said local processor

10   including an input means to allow said merchant to input data in respect of said funding request, and said local processor analysing said data using predefined rules to determine whether funding will be offered in response to said funding request; and wherein said local processor synchronises data with a central processor.

15   11.   A system as claimed in any preceding claim wherein when said funding is accepted said system sources said funding from a plurality of funders.

12.   A system as claimed in claim 11 wherein said system generates, processes and manages funding contracts for said plurality of funders in order to provide said funding.

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